

BOSTON SENIORITY

THOMAS M. MENINO, MAYOR OF BOSTON

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New Medicare Prescription Drug Plan



Mayor Menino with Commissioner Greenberg and others at a Medicare Outreach event

Beginning January 1, 2006, new Medicare prescription drug plans will be available to people with Medicare. Insurance companies and other private companies will work with Medicare to offer these drug plans. They will negotiate discounts on drug prices. These plans are different from the Medicare-approved drug discount cards, which phase out by May 15, 2006, or when your enrollment in a Medicare prescription plan takes effect, if earlier.

Medicare prescription drug plans provide insurance coverage for prescription drugs. Like other insurance, if you join, you will pay a monthly premium (generally around \$35 in 2006) and pay a share of the cost of your prescriptions. Costs will vary depending on the drug plan you choose.

Drug plans may vary in what prescription drugs are covered, how much you have to pay, and

which pharmacies you can use. All drug plans will have to provide at least a standard level of coverage, which Medicare will set. However, some plans might offer more coverage and additional drugs for a higher monthly premium. When you join a drug plan, it is important for you to choose one that meets your prescription drug needs.

If you currently have Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance) and/or Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance), you can join a Medicare prescription drug plan between November 15, 2005, and May 15, 2006. If you join by December 31, 2005, your Medicare prescription drug plan coverage will begin on January 1, 2006. If you join after that, your coverage will be effective the first day of the month after the month you join. In general, you can join or change plans once each year between November 15 and December 31.

Even if you don't use prescription drugs now, you still should consider joining a plan. If you don't join a plan by May 15, 2006 and you don't have a drug plan that covers as much or more than a Medicare prescription drug plan, you will have to pay more each month (a surcharge) to join later.

Some people with an income at or below a set amount and with limited assets (including your savings and stocks, but not counting your home) will qualify for extra help. The exact income amounts will be set in early 2005. People who qualify will get help paying for their drug plan's monthly premium, and/or for some of the cost they would normally pay for their prescriptions. The type of extra help will be based on your income and assets. Look for details in the mail from Medicare and the Social Security Administration (SSA). If you think you can qualify for extra help, you can sign up with SSA or your local Medicaid office as early as the summer of 2005.

There will be Medicare prescription drug plans that add coverage to the Original Medicare Plan. Insurance and private companies will offer these plans. There will also be other drug plans that are a part of Medicare Advantage Plans (like HMOs) in some areas. If you have a Medigap policy with

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REACH Boston Elders 2010

Reach and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health 2010 (REACH 2010) is a project designed to eliminate health disparities for minorities in the United States of America by the year 2010.

Federally funded, REACH Boston Elders 2010 (RBE2010) requires a community wide effort to improve the health of African American Elders in the City of Boston. The project will address three health priority areas: cardiovascular disease, diabetes and immunization against pneumonia.

During the planning phase of the project or phase I, the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) developed a coalition of community based service providers, government agencies, citizen groups and elders who are concerned with the health of African American elders in Boston. Collectively, BPHC and the Coalition devised a Community Action Plan (CAP).

With the RBE2010 Coalition as the driving force for Phase II, the CAP will place emphasis on the following areas:

- * Health Care Service Delivery
- * Education and Training
- * Community Mobilization and Action

For more information about REACH Boston Elders 2010 and/or to participate in the Coalition, contact the RBE2010 Project Manager at 617-534-5674 or email: elderhealth@bphc.org

Source: City of Boston Public Health Commission

DIABETES: CONTROL THE ABC'S

A is for A1C

The A1C (A one C) is a test-short for hemoglobin. A1C-measures your average blood glucose (sugar) over the last 3 months.

Suggested target: below 7

How often should you test: at least twice a year

B is for Blood Pressure

High blood pressure makes your heart work too hard.

Suggested target: below 130/80

How often you should test: at every doctor's visit

C is for cholesterol

Bad cholesterol, or LDL, builds up and clogs your arteries.

Suggested LDL target: below 100

How often you should test: at least once a year

Ask your health care provider these questions:

1. What are my ABC numbers?
2. What should my ABC target numbers be?
3. What actions should I take to reach my ABC target numbers?

Source: National Diabetes Education Program

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MAYOR'S COLUMN



The seniors in our city deserve the very best medical care and Boston certainly has the resources to provide it. Many of our seniors require long-term care and while our area boasts several excellent long-term care facilities, seniors requiring this type of choice should have a say in where they receive treatment. Often times, it is possible for seniors to receive long-term care in the comfort of their own homes, but are prevented from receiving it due to Medicaid restrictions.

This week, legislators at the State House are debating this very issue, as they examine An Act Regarding a Choice of a Long Term Care Setting. If passed, this legislation would allow seniors receiving Medicaid to make their own long-term care decisions. They could choose to enter a nursing home

or they could choose to remain at home and have the services come to them.

At my request, Eliza Greenberg, the commissioner for Elderly Affairs of the City of Boston, testified on Monday before the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs at the State House advocating in favor of this important legislation. Under this act, the Medicaid entitlement could be used as the senior and their care giver see fit. The dollars would follow the person. And after a lifetime of paying into a system, shouldn't the consumer have some influence over their treatment plan?

Enabling senior citizens to have a choice in their care setting is not just the decent thing to do, it's the cost effective thing to do. The average cost of a nursing home placement is \$56,000 where as the average annual cost of home care is half that - \$28,000. For half the cost, a senior could stay at home - being cooked for, bathed, receiving physical therapy and nursing visits instead of moving into an institution. Massachusetts already has an extensive network of home care agencies providing these services and they do an excellent work. The systems are already in place, the only change needed is the addition of choice.

Our state places seniors on Medicaid in nursing homes at a rate 65 percent above the national average. More than 90 percent of Medicaid long term care dollars are spent in nursing homes.

In a time where every dollar counts, it would be fiscally responsible for the legislature to go forward with this bill. Our tax dollars could work "smarter" if the Commonwealth promoted community care, and extended the time that an individual spends in the community, minimizing the length of stay in an institutional setting. By targeting community resources to more disabled people, the state could prevent or delay "member months" spent in Medicaid nursing home beds.

A number of other states already have similar legislation, allowing their seniors to make choices like these for themselves. If a senior is eligible for a Medicaid-funded nursing home bed, that same money should be available for that person to stay in their home if they so choose.

I support this bill for Boston's seniors. It is their money - it should be their choice.



New Medicare Plan

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drug coverage, you will get a detailed notice from your insurance company telling you whether or not your policy covers as much or more than a Medicare prescription drug plan. This notice will explain your rights and choices.

If you have prescription drug coverage from an employer or union, you will get a notice from your employer or union that tells you if your plan covers as much or more than a Medicare prescription drug plan.

If your employer or union plan covers as much or more than a Medicare prescription drug plan you can either:

- Keep your current drug plan. If you join a Medicare prescription drug plan later your monthly premium will not be higher (no surcharge), **or**
- Drop your current drug plan and join a Medicare prescription drug plan but beware, you may not be able to get your employer or union drug plan back.

If your employer or union plan covers less than a Medicare prescription drug plan you can:

- Keep your current drug plan and join a Medicare prescription drug plan to give you more complete prescription drug coverage, **or**

- Keep your current drug plan. However, if you join a Medicare prescription drug plan later, you will have to pay more for the monthly premium (surcharge), **or**
- Drop your current drug plan and join a Medicare prescription drug plan but you may not be able to get your employer or union drug plan back.

Throughout 2005, Medicare will provide you more information about Medicare prescription drug plans, including how to choose and join a drug plan that best meets your needs. In the fall of 2005, the *Medicare & You 2006* handbook will list the Medicare prescription drug plans available in your area. In mid 2005, SSA will send people with certain incomes information about how to apply for extra help paying their prescription drug costs.

In the fall of 2005, you will be able to get personalized information at www.medicare.gov on the web, or by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to help you make your best choice. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048. Your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), and other local community-based organizations, will also provide you with free health insurance counseling.

New Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Timeline:

May, 2005 SSA begins

Low Income Subsidy Mailing
CMS mails notice to LIS
deemed population

June, 2005 CMS mails notice to
SSI-only individuals in the LIS
deemed population

July 1, 2005 SSA processes sub-
sidy application

September, 2005 CMS approves
Part D plans

October, 2005 Dual eligible
auto enrolled into plan

October 1, 2005 Part D plans
begin marketing

October 1, 2005 Info on Part D
plans on medicare.gov

Nov. 15, 2005 Initial enrollment
period begins

January 1, 2006 Earliest effective
date for Part D plan

May 2006 Facilitated enrollment
for MSPs who have not
joined a plan

May 15, 2006 Initial enrollment
period ends



CONGRATULATIONS TO
THE 2005 GREATER BOSTON
SENIOR GAMES COMPETITORS

BOSTON TEACHERS UNION

JUST BROWSING

By Mel Goldstein

For the past ten years, I have been fortunate enough to be involved with the refugee and immigrant community of what is now one of the most diverse cities in America, the City of Boston.

Seventy-five percent of Boston's ethnic population comes from European, Asian, and African continents in addition to the island nations of the Caribbean and South America. What a gigantic melting pot we have become. Originally, most refugees and immigrants migrated from Europe and Spanish speaking countries whereas now, we see a tremendous influx of immigration from East, West and Central America.

Why Boston? Not only are we a welcoming city but we are very blessed to have a great Mayor, Thomas Menino. Mayor Menino is a mayor that warmly welcomes and celebrates all ethnic people. I know from personal experience, that many Europeans choose to migrate to Boston because of this climate and cultural air.

Mind sets have often misled us to make premature judgments on immigrant groups. Are we wrong? Yes. As an entity, the immigrants we see today are the most cosmopolitan populace we have ever encountered. In addition to the many attributes immigrants offer our culture, our current immigrant popula-



tion is extremely well educated and quite knowledgeable.

Just as you and I have, these people have all found a home here, a home in the city of the bean and the cod. So, welcome your new neighbors. Thank them for coming to Boston. I will share with you what some new arrivals have said to me: 'God bless America', "we have come out of concentration camps and war torn countries to a city that is welcoming and caring. We have a roof over our head, food to eat, clothes to wear, and a government that helps to support us. Where else in the world could this happen? Never where we came from. May God continue to bless this country and the wonderful caring people in it." I had to share these remarks with my faithful readers.

Stay tuned for our next column where we will talk about what was once a totally different

world with different thoughts, different ideas and different values.

In the meantime, how many of you out there remember a theatre that had entrances on both Washington and Tremont Streets? This house had a shopping arcade in its lobby at one time. When it was founded, it was the home of upscale Vaudeville in the City of Boston. It was the B.F. Keith's theater. Back then, it was called the Keith's Memorial.

Now that summer is about to take its last stance, I think about the surrounding beaches that we have frequented. How about the South Boston beaches? Carson on one end to L Street, City Point, and Castle Island? While we are at it, who remembers the original aquarium near Castle Island? I can recall digging clams at Wollaston Beach that we naturally steamed and ate

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The 32nd Annual Dorothy Curran Wednesday Evening Concert Series



Mrs. Vierra, Advocate and Advisory Council member, enjoys the concert.



Thank you to everyone who attended and worked on the concert series!



Just catching up



Mayor Menino says hello to his pals.



The Elderly Commission staff would like to thank Dianne Kerrissey and Angelo Picardi for all of your hard work!



Mathew and his mom having a good night out.



Special Thanks to MaryBeth Murray and Officer Fonseca for helping to make the Concert Series a huge success!



Quincy Market Place

Just Browsing

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with no after effects. Going crabbing on the rocks of Revere Beach. Remember getting to these beaches was part of the fun. A two hour ride on the Boston L. The non air conditioned street cars were quite similar to moving steam rooms.

It's all fun when you are young! Just try to recall when you dove into those Boston Harbor beaches at low tide and came up covered in mud. We were young...whoever let those things bother us? It was fun!!! Stay well and live long!!!

The other day, my wife and I sat and watched a DVD we have seen time and again. Suffice to

say, we have easily seen it at least 6 or 7 times. The movie is Moonstruck. The movie features Cher and a cast of great actors from Olympia Dukakis to Danny Aiello and Vincent Guardino. The movie is about an Italian family in New York's Brooklyn neighborhood. The movie shows just how many ethnic families live in close knit neighborhoods in the U.S.A.

I know that this might be boring to some of you, but I am sure that some of us can identify with this wonderful film. The scenes of the entire family sitting around the supper (not dinner) table. That tremendous feeling of warmth and caring that emanates from the squabbling and heated dialogue is just great. When the grandfather blames all the crazies on the new moon who doesn't recall that old superstition? With it all, doesn't it make you think how much simpler life was then? Just remember, we all (hopefully) come from a neighborhood that was similar if not the same to this movie neighborhood. That was Boston then and hopefully

will be again.

In closing, I feel that this is something that should be shared with the seniors of Boston. In the past 26 years, I have had the pleasure of working for this Mayor and for three others. In all that time, I have observed their demeanor towards the elderly residents of this changing city. I have watched them all coddle and interact with their elderly constituents. I have never seen a Mayor in my 26 years with the City of Boston interact and become personally involved in the genuine care and welfare of the elderly like Tom Menino. He has made it a personal commitment to see that all elderly services are on going and up to all the conveniences that are ceded to the "greatest generation". He is informed on a daily basis about the senior activities and events happening throughout the entire City of Boston.

Truly, we are blessed to be living in this fair city and to have a Mayor that cares. God bless our Mayor Tom Menino and God bless Boston.

ATTENTION

Boston Seniority is NOW accepting advertisements! Let us help you get your message out to over 30,000 senior citizens in the Boston area each month!





Commissioner Greenberg Testifies at the State House on Behalf of Seniors

Below is a copy of the testimony Commissioner Eliza Greenberg gave on June 13th, 2005 during a home care hearing at the State House. She spoke on behalf of the Mayor in support of one of the Commission's legislative priorities, an act regarding a choice of a long-term care setting.

I am Eliza Greenberg, the Commissioner on Affairs of the Elderly for the City of Boston. Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of Mayor Menino in support of the act before you, an act regarding a choice of a long-term care setting.

As policy makers, it is our collective duty to weigh in all sides of an issue and seek out the gray area. I don't often say this but there is no gray area here (regarding the choice of a long term care setting).

This act would allow seniors to choose how they spend their Medicaid dollars if they are deemed eligible for long-term care. They could choose to enter a nursing home or they could choose to remain at home and have the services come to them. Under this act, the Medicaid entitlement could be used as the senior and their caregivers see fit. In other words, the dollars would follow the person. After a lifetime of paying into a system, shouldn't the consumer have some influence over their treatment plan?

Ask any senior, ask any elder in your own family if they would prefer having an alternative in the type of care they receive. You will hear a resounding yes. Enabling senior citizens to have a choice in care setting is not just the decent thing to do, it's the cost effective thing to do.

The average annual cost of a nursing home placement is \$56,000
Whereas the average annual cost of home care is half that - \$28,000

This accounts for individualized, tailored one on one care including doctor care, meal prep, health monitoring etc. Please think about that for a moment. For half the cost, a senior could stay at home having meals cooked for them, have bathing services, have physical therapy and nursing visits instead of moving into an institution. Massachusetts already has an extensive network of home care agencies providing these services and they do excellent work. We do not have to invent anything to make this work. The systems are already in place; the only change needed is the addition of choice. As I alluded to earlier, not much of a gray area.

Make no mistake about it, some people need nursing home care but some do not and for them, we should not force an institutional model but rather promote a model based on community care and individualized treatment.

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Other states including: Vermont, Oregon, Connecticut, Illinois, Missouri and Texas have all been working to end the institutional bias in Medicaid.

The Olmsted decision of 1999, tells us "institutional placement of persons who can handle and benefit from a community setting perpetuates unwarranted assumptions that persons so isolated are incapable or unworthy of participating in community life."

I have met many seniors in nursing homes and they are far from incapable, they merely lack another option. In fact, when Massachusetts nursing home patients were surveyed, the vast majority (8,000) responded that they would prefer to be cared for at home.

In closing, I would ask you to consider these three questions:

1. If you were to design the Medicaid rules from scratch would you build in an option that makes the long-term care benefit flexible and neutral setting?
2. Do you believe that the best public policy comes from ideas generated by the constituents themselves?
3. Would you want to have a choice of long-term care setting for your own loved one?

If you answered yes, I would implore you to join Mayor Menino in support of this act. I know what I would choose for my own parents and I know what the Mayor would choose for the senior citizens of Boston. What will you choose?

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A GUIDE TO GETTING 5 A DAY

By Erin Boyd, MS, MPH, Dietetic Intern

Juicy, vine-ripened tomatoes. Soft, sweet blueberries. Crunchy, yellow corn. Tart, green apples. These are just a few examples of the many fruits and vegetables that can add nutrients and flavor to your daily diet. Getting the recommended five cups of fruits and vegetables each day may sound like a tough task, but it's probably not as difficult as you think. With a little extra planning and creativity, you can be well on your way to having more nutritious—and more flavorful—meals and snacks. Here are a few tips:

Take advantage of local farmers' markets

There is no better way to get fresh, local produce than to visit one of Boston's many farmers' markets. Seasonal fruits and vegetables are available at the markets during the summer and fall months, when the produce is at its peak. The fruits and veggies can be less expensive than those from supermarkets and the selection changes from week to week. Call the Federation of Massachusetts Farmers' Markets at (781) 893-8222 for more information and to find the location nearest you.

Add produce to your morning meal

Kick-start your day with an extra cup of fruits or vegetables at breakfast. Add chopped broccoli, onions, or peppers to scrambled eggs. Put berries or

banana slices in hot or cold cereal. Top a whole-grain bagel with low-fat cream cheese and slices of tomato or cucumber. Getting at least one cup of fruit or vegetables at breakfast will make it easier to meet the goal of five cups for the entire day.

Be prepared for a snack attack

Having fresh or sliced fruits and vegetables on hand is a great way to avoid giving in to those junk-food temptations when you need a snack. Dip baby carrots, grape tomatoes, sliced cucumbers, celery or squash into your favorite low-fat dressing. Keep a bowl of apples, pears, oranges, or bananas on the kitchen counter to curb your cravings. Add frozen berries to a cup of low-fat yogurt for a sweet treat. Dried fruit is handy and it travels well—pack a bag of dried fruit with you when you're on the go.

Reach for convenience

If it's not used right away, fresh produce can sometimes go bad before you are able to use it. Canned and frozen fruits and vegetables are a great alternative. They can be just as delicious and are often a great value. Stock up on frozen spinach, broccoli or peas the next time you are at the supermarket. Look for bags of frozen sliced peaches, mangos or strawberries. When shopping for canned fruit, be sure it is packed in water or light syrup to avoid getting too much added sugar. Canned vegetables can contain

salt, so choose the salt-free or low-sodium varieties.

Fill your plate with veggies first

At mealtime, try filling at least one-third to one-half of your plate with salad or vegetables before adding smaller portions of meat, rice, potatoes or other foods. This way, you will be sure to have enough room on your plate for plenty of colorful, crunchy vegetables, which are usually lower in fat and calories than many other foods.

Satisfy your sweet tooth

Fruit can make a tasty low-calorie dessert that's both nutritious and delicious. Try adding fresh peaches to a cup of low-fat vanilla frozen yogurt. Toss a banana into the blender with a handful of blueberries and a cup of low-fat milk for a creamy smoothie. Sprinkle cinnamon onto apple slices for a crunchy, sweet treat.

Whether they're red, green, orange, yellow, blue, white or purple, fruits and vegetables can add color, flavor and loads of nutrients to your daily meals and snacks.



The Mayor's Advisory Council Takes on a New Role

By Kaysea Cole



Kaye Ryan, Advisory Council Chair

The Mayor's Advisory Council is a group of approximately 100 volunteer activists who assist in furthering the Commission's mission of developing and coordinating community-based systems of services for all older persons in Boston. Specifically, the council assists in the development and administration of the Area Agency Plan by reviewing community policies, programs and actions that influence Boston seniors.

The Council includes individuals and representatives of community organizations who will help to enhance the leadership role in developing community-based systems of services. The Advisory Council is made up of more than 90% of older persons of whom 50% are minority.

There are voting and non-voting membership categories including: Elected Neighborhood Representatives, Appointed Members and Honorary Members. In addition, the Advisory Council oversees the following task force meetings that meet once a month at City Hall

with the facilitation and support of Elderly Commission staff:

- * Housing Task Force
- * Legislative/Advocacy Task Force
- * Health and Long Term Care Task Force

The Council now votes on legislative priorities for the Commission. This year our legislative priorities are:

Increasing the city and state property tax exemptions for seniors. Home values have nearly tripled in the past decade in Boston and many seniors living on a fixed income simply cannot afford to pay them. Seniors are forced to "down size" due to increase tax demands and the inability to keep up with the physical demands homeownership requires. Therefore, the Advocacy Task force submitted what eligibility requirements they would like to see change to both the department of revenue (state) and the assessing department (city).

Supporting Home Care legislation. An act regarding a choice of a long term care setting. If passed, this dollar neutral act will allow seniors who are nursing home eligible the choice in how to spend their long-term care dollars. They can use it for home care or institutionalized care. Currently in Massachusetts, the only option for long term care is institutionalized care.

Prescription Drug Fair Pricing Act. This act will help ensure fair business practices by the pharmaceutical companies and also afford the states a bulk purchasing rate. Presently, pharmaceutical companies charge price per pill (with the exception of the Veterans Association) contributing to the alarming cost of medication.

The Advisory Council has several roles and functions. One is to establish priority service funding areas for Title III Older American Act dollars. The Commission on Affairs of the Elderly through Title III dollars helps to financially support forty-seven non-profit senior service agencies. The Advisory Council takes an active role in guiding this administration on how to allocate these funds.

The service priorities areas for this years funding cycle are: Legal services, translation and interpreting services, in home health services, food shopping assistance, and senior center programs.

Similarly to the demographic of the council, the Advisory Council member's roles and activities are equally as diverse. For example, some members take an active role in our three sub task forces, "educate" at the state house, write letters, and testify on the priority legislation. Historically, Advisory Council members were not provided the

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Senior A.I.D.E.S In Action

By Annette Richardson



Senior AIDES participant, Mary Doherty

Ms. Mary Doherty joined **Seniors Training for Employment Program (S.T.E.P.)** in April 2005 after having been unemployed since September 2001. In September 2001, Mary was let go from her previous place of employment due to downsizing. Leaving her last job optimistically, Mary decided to take some courses at Bunker Hill Community College to make herself more appealing to future employers. Mary completed her courses in June of 2002 and sent out updated resumes to prospective employers. When the fall of 2002 came around, Ms. Doherty took yet another course to update her medical billing skills.

Due to an old leg injury, Mary had to have a Total Knee Replacement in March of 2003. After recovering from her operation and no longer using a cane, Mary decided to start sending resumes again. Unfortunately, Mary's resume gained little attention. During

this time, Mary continued to visit friends and family who were supportive of her efforts and kept encouraging her to keep trying and not give up. One day, while visiting her uncle in a nursing facility, Mary read the article about S.T.E.P. in the *Boston Seniority*. As she read the article, it dawned on her that she had read a similar advertisement about S.T.E.P. in the newspaper. Mary decided this program may provide an opportunity in securing employment. It was time for her to call make an appointment for the the Elderly Commission and program.

Mary Doherty became an official participant in S.T.E.P. during April of 2005. Mary's first assignment was for the Boston Public Schools' Title I Parent Resource Center. She was assigned as an Office Assistant at the Nathan Hale School. During the summer when the school was closed, Mary was assigned as an Office Assistant to another Resource Center. All the while, Mary maintained her diligence in the job search by continuing to seek out other employment by sending out resumes, cover letters, responding to job leads and involving herself in networking opportunities. At last, while networking with a friend, she heard about a promising position opening.

After submitting her resume and interviewing for the position, Mary was hired.

Mary has a new job at a medical facility as a Unit Secretary. Even though this is an area that she was not familiar with, we strongly believe in Mary's ability and know she will succeed in her endeavors while continuing to enrich the lives of the people around her.

Senior A.I.D.E.S Program Requirements:

- * Age 55 or older
- * City of Boston Resident
- * Meet income eligibility
- * Not Currently Employed
- * Interested in full or part time employment
- * Perform self directed job search
- * Apply for jobs weekly

**For more information
please call 617-635-3989.**

Healthy Wealthy & Wyse

By Geraldine C. Wyse, RN

In Case Of Emergency ICE Campaign

My friend, Kathleen Gior-dano, Public Relations Director for the Elderly Commission, emailed this note to me and I think it is important to pass on this very important information to all *Boston Seniority* readers.

I verified this information with a friend who lives in London. She says it is true. The campaign has already begun in England. You may not own a cell phone yet, but I am sure most of the people in your world do!!! Please pass this on.

Following the recent London bombings, an English Ambulance Service has launched an international "In Case of Emergency" campaign. They have discovered that at almost every accident scene there is a working cell phone on the victim(s).

The idea is that you store the word "I C E" in your cell phone address book, and against it enter the number of the person you would want to be contacted in "Case of Emergency."



In an emergency, ambulance, paramedics, police, fire, and hospital staff will be able to quickly find out who your next of kin are and be able to contact them. Often times, the person is unable to talk and valuable time is wasted trying to locate family members. More than one contact? Write in - ICE 1, ICE 2, ICE 3.

You should pass this valuable suggestion on to your family and friends. You will be doing a great service to them.

Americans love their Barbeques!

Now that the summer is over, you may be interested in these facts.

According to the Hearth, Patio and Barbeque Association (www.hpba.org), 14.4 million barbeque grills were shipped to stores in 2004!!! They expect the trend to continue in 2005.

Did you know?

The average grill owner has 22 cookouts during the grilling "season" from mid May to September, and 70% of all grill owners fire up their grills on the Fourth of July. July 4th is the most popular holiday for barbequing, followed by Memorial Day (62%) and Labor Day (55%).

Another interesting fact is that 63% of grill owners use propane, also known as liquid petroleum gas (LPG). The majority of these grills use portable gas canisters. There is a small group of homeowners who have access to natural gas or a propane supply (usually through a permanently installed propane tank). They never have to refill their gas canisters! Have you ever been to a cookout when the tank goes empty? It is not a pleasant sight!! I have been at cookouts when lively discussions are started about charcoal vs. propane gas. Which food really does taste better?

It is time to put away the grill. Pack up the utensils, coolers, picnic tables and bug sprays. I hope you enjoyed your summer.



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Over 100 years of excellence

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Charlestown Pride Week Begins with Annual Luncheon



Mayor presents award to Peter Looney

at the luncheon, which was held at the Knights of Columbus Hall. Mayor Thomas M. Menino and Commissioner Eliza F. Greenberg were both on hand to greet and socialize with seniors.

Mayor Menino thanked everyone for attending, including Peter Looney for being a wonderful Master of Ceremonies and the President of the Bunker Hill Associates, Bill Carr. In addition to expressing his excitement for Sunday's parade, he also went on to say that, "Cities are made up of people that work hard for their community, thank you."

While seniors ate their lunch, Angelo Picardi provided entertainment with music from the Phantom of the Opera, among

many other favorite tunes. Many seniors showed off their moves while dancing the Hully Gully and Electric Slide. Mel Goldstein from the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services also shared some of his wit and charm.

The Charlestown Luncheon was co-sponsored by the Bunker Hill Associates and the Bunker Hill Day Parade Committee, with the assistance of the John F. Kennedy Family Service Center and the Boston Elderly Commission.

The Bunker Hill Association has been raising money for the youth of Charlestown for the past twenty years.

On Wednesday, June 8th, the Annual Charlestown Luncheon was held in honor of Charlestown Pride Week. Over 150 seniors were in attendance



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DIM SUM LUNCHEON IN CHINATOWN



Mayor Menino laughs with friends at the Dim Sum Luncheon in Chinatown

The Dim Sum Luncheon was held on Wednesday, June 1st, at the Empire Garden in Chinatown. Over 300 seniors from South Cove and the Chinese Golden Age Center were in attendance. Seniors were greet-

ed and welcomed by Mayor Thomas M. Menino and Commissioner Eliza F. Greenberg. Mayor Menino was also on hand to present a Certificate of Appreciation to the owner of the Empire Garden, David Wong, for all of his hard work. Wong was also honored with an honorary Boston Street sign with his name on it.



A traditional Dim Sum meal, which translates to "touch the heart" in Cantonese, was provided. The feast is a breakfast/lunch meal of individually prepared dishes. A Dim Sum typically consists of steamed shrimp and pork dumplings, deep-fried egg rolls, taro-root dumplings, green peppers with shrimp filling, various pastries, and many different types of meat dishes.

Seniors enjoyed their lunch surrounded by the beautiful decor of the Empire Garden, which was a grand theater house in the 1940s.

For more information on the programs and services of Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age call 617-426-1628

Department of Neighborhood Development Senior Home Rehabilitation Programs

The Senior Home Initiative of the Department of Neighborhood Development provides a comprehensive set of home rehabilitation and repair services to income eligible elderly homeowners in the City of Boston. DND has contracted with several neighborhood based non-profit agencies to provide minor home repairs. The agencies determine what kinds of repairs they can perform under the program.

*For more information, contact the
Department of Neighborhood Development at 617-635-0338*

Mayor's Advisory

continued from page 12



Mary Scrivano, Advisory Council Member

opportunity to make real policy change. Their experience, education and training were undervalued and underutilized resulting in decreased civic engagement initiatives. In an effort to change this underutilization, the City of Boston has embraced new promising practices to allow seniors the opportunity to be heard.

The City of Boston Elderly Commission's Advisory Council promising practices are ownership and value. The Commission has increased council members roles and responsibilities by actively engaging seniors in policy development and service planning. By actively involving the members, we strengthen their sense of value, ownership and participation in civic engagement initiatives.

The Advisory Council not only assists the Commission in directing its federal funding, they assist in the monitoring of funding recipients. In order to gain a better understanding of services provided to seniors, Advisory Council members join Elderly Commission monitors

on site visits to provide insight and suggestions. Since having the seniors accompany Commission monitors on site visits, we have witnessed agencies take note of and begin to entertain senior input. Examples of elder input on site visits and on senior services have resulted in: senior centers whose space has been limited are working with the city to try to seek more efficient space for recreational, social and educational activities; agencies are keeping better records to ensure follow up and proper tracking; programs are now completing client satisfaction surveys resulting in a 75%

improvement from last year. With the advice of Advisory Council members, groups are no longer "dummied down". All programs are required to keep and submit activity calendars for outreach and organizational purposes.

Over all, the improvements that this Commission has already gained through the seniors who volunteer here have been both remarkable and invaluable.

For more information about the Mayor's Advisory Council and how to get involved please call: 617-635-3979



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The Omni Parker House

A Landmark for Boston and The United States

By Sarah Vollmann, Americorps*VISTA

Where did Boston cream pie originate? Where did Ralph Waldo Emerson and his literary/intellectual friends meet on Saturdays in the mid-nineteenth century? Where did then-Mayor of Boston James Michael Curley hold daily luncheons? What is the nation's oldest continuously operating hotel, founded 1855? The Omni Parker House, of course!

In 1854, Harvey D. Parker bought an old mansion at the corner of Tremont and School streets. In its place, he built an Italianate-style stone and brick hotel with a white marble face: Parker's, the new luxury hotel.

Parker had owned a restaurant in Boston, and knew that providing fine dining for the local crowd was as important as comfortable lodging for out-of-towners. So the Parker House offered traditional New England and European dishes, but many favorites became American ones, too: Boston cream pie, lemon meringue pie, and Parker House rolls, to name a few. According to legend, the term "scrod" originated there.

Vital to the success of the Parker House was its location. The Tremont Theater, Boston Athenaeum, King's Chapel, Boston City Hall, the Massachusetts State House, and Old Corner Bookstore were all just steps away. Ralph Waldo Emerson would come to Boston from

his home in Concord, go to the Old Corner Bookstore and Athenaeum, and dine at the Parker House with his friends in the Saturday Club. These men included novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne, poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes. Longfellow drafted "Paul Revere's Ride," the idea for the Atlantic Monthly was first raised, and British author Charles Dickens gave his first American reading of "A Christmas Carol" at the Parker House.

John F. Kennedy announced his candidacy for the United States Congress there. James Michael Curley had daily luncheons there while he was Mayor of Boston. Massachusetts governor and Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis announced the end of his political career, and Senator Paul

Tsongas dropped out of the presidential race there. Actors including Sarah Bernhardt and John Wilkes Booth were guests. The Parker House was Dickens' home base during his American lecture tour of 1867-68.

Harvey Parker died in 1884, leaving no heirs, so in his will he leased his hotel to his later partners, who put on some additions and new decor. The Whipple Corporation bought the hotel in 1925, demolished Parker's building, and opened a new Parker House in 1927, which stands today.

Since then, the hotel has undergone many renovations and been purchased by some corporations, most recently becoming the Omni Parker House in a move by Omni Hotels. But one thing that will not change about the hotel is its illustrious Boston past!



The original Parker House Hotel, which is celebrating its one hundred fiftieth anniversary this year.



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
THOMAS M. MENINO

A copy of the letter
Mayor Menino wrote in
support of property tax
exemption increases for
Seniors. These Bills are
on the floor of the
State House.

May 17, 2005

Chairwoman Cynthia Stone Creem
Senate Committee on Revenue
Room 416B, State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Creem:

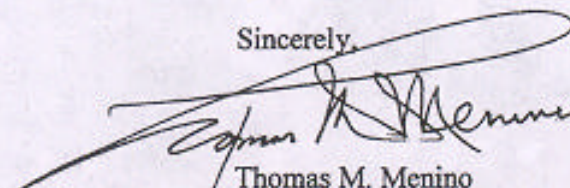
I would like to express my support for the Legislature's ongoing efforts to offset significant increases in seniors' property tax bills. Two of the bills before your committee today propose a number of options that would help ease the effect of drastic property tax increases on seniors, and I urge your careful consideration.

The City of Boston has historically demonstrated leadership on this issue, consistently offering the maximum exemption benefit to our seniors allowed by state law. Three years ago, we were leading advocates in a successful effort to lower the minimum age to 65 and expand the income limits of the Clause 41C exemption program.

The two bills offered by yourself and Rep. Casey would enhance these efforts by adjusting the maximum elderly exemption offered by a city or town as well as further extending the income eligibility for that exemption. In addition, the bills would allow cities and towns, at their option, to set interest rates on tax deferrals below the current 8% level as well as increasing the income restrictions. These efforts will serve to further encourage participation in this important program for seniors who are looking to stay in their homes for the long term.

In light of the continuous pressure cities and towns are putting on the property tax in order to balance the budget, I ask that you consider the points presented in these bills as a way to assist those residents that might not otherwise be able to stay in our communities. I hope that you will agree that these bills offer valuable tools in providing the means for seniors to continue their cherished presence in the neighborhoods of our City. Thank you for your consideration, and I welcome the opportunity to provide any assistance the Committees may require as you continue your work on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston

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SUMMER IN THE CITY

PICTURES AND HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS SUMMER'S EVENTS



Mayor Menino joins the 60 plus Veterans Club for their annual BBQ at Houghton's Pond



Proud Grandparents show off their beautiful grandson at Italian Pride night in South Boston



Charlestown couple celebrate their 50th Anniversary at the Mayor's Garden Party



East Boston gang enjoys an incredible view of the Boston Harbor on the Mayor's Advisory Council boat cruise

MORE SUMMER EVENT PICTURES



Kaye Klimic and her sassy friend whoop it up at Italian Pride night



Dotty Malloy was our dancing queen this year



Joseph Rull and his Aunt at Italian night in Southie



A pretty lady wears a pretty bonnet at the Picnic in the Park



The Mayor always says hello to his good friend Mary



Mrs. Menino talks with her friends at the Wednesday night concerts



Advisory Council Members gather for fun on harbor cruise

The Mayor's 10th Annual Garden Party



Barbara Hopwood keeps cool in the shade of her hat!



A special thank you to the Costa Family!

Mayor Menino's 10th Annual Senior Spring Garden Party was held on Tuesday, June 28th, at the Boston Public Garden. Buses carrying seniors from all over Boston began arriving at the gates at 10:30 a.m., where they followed the sounds of the band's music to the party. Red, white, and blue tables, located with a scenic view of the famous Frog Pond, greeted over 750 seniors. Master of Ceremonies, Toni Pollak, welcomed guests and introduced Mayor Thomas M. Menino and Commissioner Eliza F. Greenberg. Mayor Menino thanked everyone for attending, and presented gifts to the sponsors of the event; which included: Tom Kershaw of the Hampshire House, Paul & Lyn

Paget of Swan Boats Inc., Bill Stoddard of the Police Activities League, Peter Costa of Jennifer's Frosty, Catherine Hardaway and former Commissioner Joyce Williams, both of the Caregiver Alliance. Seniors were served lunch which was provided by Cheers Restaurant. In addition to live entertainment, those in attendance were also able to enjoy free rides on the Swan Boats. Towards the end of the day, there was a raffle where seniors won a variety of prizes. As attendees departed, each was presented with a beautiful plant that served as a reminder of the wonderful events of the day.



Mayor Menino listens closely to his wise friend



Three pretty ladies smile for the camera

Senior Companion Program

By Eileen O'Connor



Marie Gayhart

Marie Gayhart was born, raised and has lived in East Boston all of her life. She is married and has raised five children, three daughters and two sons. In 1984, she began working for the East Boston Health Center and in 1999 she retired. Soon after retiring, she became interested in becoming a Senior Companion and volunteer out of the East Boston Health Center.

Marie lives in senior housing where several of her clients reside. Often times, you see Marie with her black and white

hat on sitting across the street with clients. While working with clients, some of Marie's usual activities included: eating ice cream cones and people watching. While working, Marie not only spends time with current clients, she also spends time with former clients.

One day when Marie's son Michael was visiting, he saw a new gentleman moving into the senior housing. Michael said to the gentleman, "if you should need anything, my mother is in her room and would be glad to help you." Michael notified his mother about the new tenant moving in the building. Sure enough, after Michael left, Marie made some homemade soup and went down the hall to welcome the gentleman.

Marie has twenty clients with whom she accompanies to the hospital, clinic, and shopping. In addition to her Senior Companion role, Marie is also a Eucharist Minister. Often times you will find her giving communion to many of her neighbors and clients who are unable

to attend church.

Later on in the day, Marie asked if we could accompany her to visit a client in Chelsea at an Assisted Living. Upon meeting and throughout our visit, we witnessed the wonderful compassion Marie has with her clients. I had to ask Marie why she continues to be a volunteer and she responded by saying that, "It is all God's work."

Marie's supervisors at the East Boston Health Center, Kathy and Leanne had this to say about their popular volunteer, "Marie is the finest example of a true volunteer. Everything Marie does is from her heart. Whenever we are challenged as how to meet a need, Marie is part of the solution. The East Boston Neighborhood Health Center is very fortunate to have Marie's kindness and her overwhelming dedication benefits our patients!"

For information on the Senior Companion program, please call: 617-635-3987

A La Tercera Celebration De La Cultura Hispana Para Los Envejecientes

Please Join us for the Hispanic Heritage Month Senior Luncheon
At the Frank Russell Memorial Auditorium, 70 Talbot Ave. Dorchester
October 4th, 2005 from 11:00 to 3:00 PM
Please Call the Elderly Commission for details 617-635-4371

RSVP

Volunteer Opportunities



*Fran Johnene with Marion Jones
RSVP volunteer*

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program is federally funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service and is sponsored by the Commission on Affairs of the Elderly. Volunteering through the RSVP program offers seniors reimbursement for transportation costs incurred while doing volunteer work. Volunteer assignments coincide with the special interests of volunteers. Volunteers are assigned at non-profit agencies of their choice throughout the neighborhoods of Boston. If you are interested, contact Lynnette at 617-635-1794, Kali at 617-635-2360, or Fran Johnene, RSVP Director, at 617-635-3988.

U.S.S. Constitution Museum

The U.S.S. Constitution Museum is seeking volunteers

to lead school and public programs for children ages 5-11. No experience necessary, training is provided. Weekday morning availability is required. Must be able to stand for extended periods of time and have no problem with stairs. Interest in working with history and kids is a plus. Free parking in Charlestown Navy Yard for those who drive their own vehicle. For those using public transportation; it is only a 15-minute walk from the Green Line, or a 2-minute walk from the water shuttle that connects to Long Wharf/Blue Line. For more information call Andrea West, Education Coordinator, at 617-426-1812.

SHINE

Become a SHINE volunteer. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts' SHINE Counseling Program is a leader in the country in providing information, counseling and assistance to elders and Medicare beneficiaries of all ages. As a result of the assistance SHINE counselors provide, clients see significant financial savings. If you are interested in assisting your peers become a SHINE volunteer. No experience necessary as training and certification is provided. Volunteers work in their own

community. Often they are placed in community/senior centers. Hours are flexible as long as they fall within the regular workweek. For more information or to join, please contact Sheila Lehane, SHINE Counselor 617-635-3243.

Dress for Success Boston!

Dress for Success helps low-income women who have landed a job interview, but cannot afford to dress professionally. The organization provides a free interview outfit, complete with shoes and accessories. This can provide the confidence that can boost a low-income woman back to her feet. Dress for Success is looking for the following: personal shoppers to work directly with the clients choosing outfits, office help to schedule appointments and answer the phones, clothing management to help with inventory, and volunteer coordinators to interview and train new volunteers and keep records. Dress for Success is located in Roslindale Village, minutes from the commuter rail! For more information please call Nancy Schneider at 617-323-7544.

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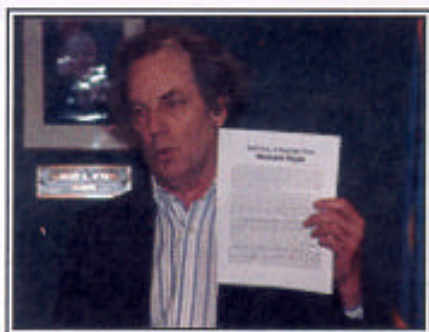
Seniors Deserve Equal Choice of Home Care

By Al Norman

Massachusetts spends most of its long-term care dollars on a form of care that most seniors don't want. 78% of our Medicaid long-term care money goes to nursing homes, only 22% goes to community care services. It's time to honor the preference of elders and individuals with disabilities to be cared for at home. We need to put the consumer in charge of the dollars, not the providers. Instead of talking about "nursing home dollars" or "home care dollars", we need to talk about "consumer dollars."

Recently, the State Legislature took its first look at the so-called "equal choice" bills, which could make a significant difference in the lives of disabled adults. These identical bills, H. 2898 and S.434, are modeled on a concept implemented in Vermont, Oregon, and other states, to end the "institutional bias" in Medicaid, and create a "long term care benefit" in the Commonwealth that is "setting neutral." Vermont has created an "either setting" approach to long term care, giving consumers a truly level playing field for selecting where they will receive supports."

Since the creation of Medicaid in 1965, our state's long-term care program has been modeled around institutional care. Since the *Olmsted vs. L.C.*



Al Norman, Director of Mass Home Care addresses the Mayor's Advisory Council

decision of the U.S. Supreme court in June of 1999, which said that disabled people have a right to be cared for in "the least restrictive setting" appropriate to their needs, a number of states have moved to end the bias that directs funds and clients towards costly institutional settings. Instead of defining long term care around one specific setting, the equal choice bills create a "long term care benefit" without reference to setting, and allows elders to make their own choice of setting. The money "follows" the person as their needs change.

Massachusetts places seniors on Medicaid in nursing homes at a rate 65% above the national average. Our tax dollars could work "smarter" if the Commonwealth promoted community care, and extended the time that an individual spends in the community, minimizing the length of stay in an institutional setting. MassHealth dollars for long term care would be dedicated to

the individual, not the program, and follow the individual's changing needs

Mayor Tom Menino has embraced the "equal choice" bills. "Enabling senior citizens to have a choice in their care setting is not just the decent thing to do," the Mayor has written, "it's the cost effective thing to do. If a senior is eligible for a Medicaid-funded nursing home bed, those same dollars should be available for that person to stay in their home if they so choose. We should honor (elders') preferences, respect their rights and allow them to choose where they receive their care. It is their money—it should be their choice."

Seniors wishing to support H. 2898 and S. 434 should call 617-722-2000 and ask for their state lawmaker by name. Urge them to get the "equal choice" bills onto the Governor's desk by Christmas. This would be a great civil rights present for the elderly and disabled of our state.

*Al Norman is the
Executive Director of Mass
Home Care.*

*He can be reached at
413-773-5555 or
info@masshomecare.org*

Beat the Heat

The preventative measures that were taken to battle this year's Summer sizzler

The summer of 2005 was quite a scorcher. With temperatures practically reaching into the triple digits on more than one occasion, Mayor Thomas M. Menino took action to ensure that the citizens of Boston could stay as cool as possible.

When the forecast reported temperatures in the 90s with a high humidity level, heat alerts were issued, and press releases were made with instructions on what citizens, specifically, the senior community, could do to avoid heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Bostonians were urged to take advantage of air conditioning, to avoid strenuous activity, to stay hydrated by drinking plenty of

water, and to avoid hot foods and cooking. Mayor Menino also suggested that taking lukewarm showers or baths, and wearing light-colored, loose clothing were ways to avoid heat-related emergencies.

The city also extended the hours of air-conditioned sites in community centers, extended pool hours, and alerted additional city services as they were needed. A complete list of cooling centers, pools and misting centers was also sent to the media to help alert residents.

The Commission on the Affairs of the Elderly was involved in proactively informing seniors to stay healthy during the hot and humid weather

through community seminars.

In his weekly column, the Mayor also described the symptoms of heat illness, which include: dizziness, weakness, fainting, vomiting (heat exhaustion), confusion, agitation, unresponsiveness and hot skin (heat stroke). If any life threatening signs were present, the Mayor urged residents to call 911. He also included the numbers of his 24-Hour Hotline, the Elderly Commission, and other emergency contacts in the event of an urgent situation.

With the winter right around the corner, we can all hope that the summer of 2005 will leave its humidity behind.

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Better at Home

By Paul Schratter

**A copy of a letter sent to the Boston Globe Editor
By Advisory Council member Paul Schratter.**

With reference to the Globe editorial "Better at Home", I'd like to offer these comments:

With my wife and I in our mid-eighties, the question of what would happen to us if we could no longer take care of ourselves began to occupy us long ago. What then seemed to be normal was to be placed into a nursing home. But being aware of questionable or ill treatment faced by some in those institutions, it evidently was not an agreeable choice. My wife refused any such plan for herself. We committed to long-term insurance plans that provided eventual home care for my wife and nursing home care for me, considering the possibility that I might be in a condition in which my wife could no longer take care of me. With the enormous cost of care in nursing homes, the insurance was intended to pay only a fraction of such expenses, reducing the inevitable financial burden. I have now come to the decision that I, too, want to do anything reasonable to avoid ending my life one day in a nursing facility.

Meanwhile, we have become more aware of the availability and growth of In-Home Care, provided by Massachusetts State programs for those with limited incomes and private plans that allow elders in need of care to remain in their homes with personal care by someone who comes to visit as needed. While such assistance evidently cannot be adequate for someone requiring round-the-clock care, it offers prospects of a bridge for us and others who may depend on help but fear a nursing home environment. An adult foster care program, placing the person in need of help into a caring family, adds another dimension to the available options.

"Better at Home" is without question a far preferable alternative to being destined to a final stay in an institution, even one with caring personnel. I would want to be taken care of in my familiar environment, my home, with its association of past well-being, rather than among strangers, waiting for life to be over. To open this choice to as many citizens of the Commonwealth as possible, I urge the passage of the "Equal Choice" bill, H. 2898, S 434 by the Legislature.

Paul Schratter
Boston, MA
Mayor's Advisory Council Member

LGBT Aging Project

by Lisa Krinsky

In Massachusetts we've spent a lot of time talking about the civil rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people over the past few years as we became the first state in the country to offer legal marriage to same sex couples.

But we haven't talked a lot about LGBT older adults. Are they the same as their heterosexual neighbors or are they different? Why does it matter?

We know that as they age, LGBT elders are concerned about the same things everyone else is concerned about – maintaining their health and independence, worrying about living on a reduced, fixed income, not sure who will care for them if something happens, and wanting to participate in their neighborhoods and communities. And like every tax paying citizen they want to feel they can use the programs they've contributed their fare share to build.

But there are other concerns too, that these programs and services -- senior centers, home care services, luncheon sites, transportation providers, elderly housing, nursing homes, Social Security and Medicaid – aren't prepared to work with LGBT elders and their families/friends. The medical system – hospitals, doctors and nurses – is set up to work with “immediate family” when you are their patient. However, the legal definition of “immediate family” would not

recognize a lesbian couple that has been together for 37 years, and medical decisions might end up being made by a blood relative with whom you have very little contact. Many LGBT elders came of age in a world that was not accepting or respectful of them, and they learned that best way for them to avoid mistreatment was to remain invisible. This leaves LGBT elders more likely to rely on themselves, and their friends and reluctant to risk using the resources available to all elders.

The mission of the LGBT Aging Project is to ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender elders have equal access to the life –prolonging benefits, services, protections and institutions that their heterosexual neighbors rely upon. Until our formation there was no organized effort in Massachusetts to understand and address the needs of this invisible, isolated and understudied population. Typically LGBT elder activists replicate mainstream services and provide them directly to elders. While this is important work the LGBT Aging Project has a different approach. We offer conversations, consensus building and change within the vast aging services networks that already exist. We offer education and technical assistance to fair minded mainstream elder care providers who are willing to serve all clients competently,

equally and sensitively, but in this case simply don't know how. And we offer frameworks for LGBT elders and their families who are willing to advocate for themselves. We are an overwhelmingly volunteer based organization that is statewide, and have deep roots in the Boston area, including work with the Boston Commission on Affairs of the Elderly, Boston Senior Home Care, Caregiver Alliance of Suffolk County, Central Boston Elder Services, Ethos, Greater Boston Legal Services, Jewish Family & Children's Services, and Kit Clark Senior Services to name a few.

So what have we done recently? In June, which is Gay Pride month, we hosted our third annual Gay Pride T- Dance for LGBT elders and their friends, and many LGBT elders joined us for a great time. Barney Frank was our keynote speaker at a Town Meeting for LGBT elders and baby boomers to talk about their interests and concerns for the future. We host a monthly LGBT Caregiver Support Group for LGBT people caring for family, friends or partners. We are pleased that there is a weekly luncheon site, Café Emmanuel, every Thursday that welcomes LGBT elders and their friends.

Are gay seniors looking for anything special? Not at all! Just equal access to the things we've

continued on page 34

Museum Men

Second in a Series on Boston RSVP Volunteers

By Sara Vollmann
Americorps*VISTA

When visitors step up to the Museum of Science, a monstrous Tyrannosaurus Rex model looms far over their heads—frozen in stride, claws ready, teeth bared. But right before the statue is a dinosaur footprint model and sign at the visitor's height, inviting you to put your own foot inside. This outdoor exhibit can serve as a metaphor for the Museum's inside. Enter the Museum and it's easy to forget it is on the Charles River Dam with city views. You're in the sometimes-scary world of science that the Museum makes fun and accessible to you.

What happens in the halls of the Museum is "largely, largely done by volunteers," said Lucy Darragh in Volunteer Services. About half of the 700 volunteers there are men, and on weekdays, most of them are retirees.

RSVP volunteer Al Ancil is a volunteer in the Exhibit Hall Interpreter program—one of 30 volunteer positions—which means he is responsible for walking around the Museum, encouraging visitors' curiosity in exhibits, helping them with hands-on interaction.

A bright red jacket and name tag mark Al and the other volunteers who swarm about the building. He gives me a tour of the Museum; our first stop is a video station labeled, "Reflect

on the Beauty of Change." On screen, hummingbirds drink from flowers. "That's the great part about working here: things change, and you get something to stimulate your mind," Al tells me.

We progress through the Museum to Al's favorite section: "Investigate! A See-For-Yourself Exhibit." Among the many things to see are quotations on the walls from such great minds as John Locke, Leonardo da Vinci, and William Shakespeare.

The Museum of Science attracts many retired scientist volunteers, including Al—a retired engineer at the Army Materials Research Lab in Watertown (formerly Watertown Arsenal). Darragh says many men volunteers there are Exhibit Hall Interpreters, like Al, who know hard science; women tend to be more in human biology, having had careers as doctors and nurses.

I allow Al to help children set their car in motion down the Solar Race Track so I can spend some time exploring this exhibit myself. Nestled among the busy activity stations—where visitors can race each other, look for archaeological remains, steer a bicycle by just leaning, and more—I find "The Art of Drawing Conclusions," a relatively quiet room of quotations, com-

puters, and a print of a painting by Paul Gauguin. It is a tribute to questioning, curiosity, and learning.

"I've got the best of both worlds, because I also volunteer at the Museum of Fine Arts, and you can't get any better than that: science and fine arts," Al told me earlier in our tour. The two don't seem so different, after all.

The research library of the New England Historic Genealogical Society has one male RSVP volunteer, Wilfred T. "Bill" Crozier. He started spending time at the library to research his own family history. Twenty-one years ago, the Society asked him if he would like to volunteer. His first ten years there, he answered mail from members; for a few years afterward, he reduced the size of state records and helped librarians as needed; for the last three to four years, he has worked in microtext. Now in his eighties, he answers each of my questions accurately and with confidence.

There are "two ways of going" in genealogy, he explained. One can go from either a great-grandparent or from oneself. "You find out some interesting things that they [your family members] have done in their lives—whether

continued on page 34

Stop and Shop at Brigham Circle Announces New Services Aimed at Assisting Older Adults and Customers with Disabilities

Mission Hill, Boston -As part of Stop & Shop's commitment to older adults and people with disabilities, the Stop and Shop in Brigham Circle is offering two services that will improve access and convenience. Steve Farley, the Manager of the Brigham Circle Stop & Shop, announced that his store now offers a grocery delivery service on Wednesdays between the hours of 9am and 7pm. He said that for a \$6 delivery fee, the store will deliver groceries within a 2 mile radius of its Mission Hill location.

He also announced the Shoppers' Assistance Program. Mr. Farley said, "We will provide a shopping assistant for any customer requesting one. This program will be coordinated by Sean Killilea and Angelica DiSanto. Sean is our full time Cash Department Head. Angelica is our full time Florist. The shopping assistant will assist the customer in any way they need. We are committed to making the Stop & Shop in Brigham Circle a friendly accessible store for all of our customers."

Mr. Farley is a member of the Steering Committee of the Elder Friendly Business District (EFBD) pilot project. The EFBD pilot project is a public/private partnership ini-

ated by the Boston Partnership for Older Adults and is directed by the Mission Hill Main Streets Program. Maggie Cohn, the Executive Director of Mission Hill Main Streets said that the goal of the pilot project is to "identify infrastructure improvements, new business niches, and resources for older adults that will help neighborhood commercial districts remain vibrant centers of neighborhood civic life.

Working with the business community, we will identify and solve key challenges in the effort to make our neighborhood commercial districts accessible to all residents, no matter what their age.

Steve Farley and Stop & Shop are wonderful examples of how a manager and a business can help to pinpoint the needs and

concerns of their older customers and respond."

The EFBD pilot project was announced last fall by Mayor Menino who said that he and his department heads will look for "lessons learned" and replicate the successes of the Mission Hill project in business districts across the city. "Our goal is to make Boston the most livable city in the nation for older adults."

The Boston Partnership for Older Adults is collaboration of over 100 public, private, and non-profit organizations and over 200 individuals including older adults from every neighborhood in the city of Boston. Its membership is dedicated to ensuring that all older adults have access to the resources and support needed to age with dignity.

Paid Advertisement

Final / Funeral Expenses

We are pleased to announce a Senior Final Expense Plan, to help pay what the government does not. At present the government pays \$255. If you qualify, the Senior Plan will pay up to \$15,000 to your family. For more information with no obligation call (781) 461-0203 and leave your name and address and we will have information to you within a week.

RSVP Opportunities

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Parents Helping Parents

Become a facilitator and work towards child abuse prevention. Parents helping parents runs self-help groups for parents who feel isolated, overwhelmed, or afraid of their anger toward their children. Each session meets for two hours on a weekday evening. The success of these groups lies with the neutral party (facilitator). The facilitator is in the room to explain ground rules and not bring his or her own problems into the discussion. Requirements are as follows; attend, facilitate each meeting, 2-3 hours of telephone calls each week, and prepare reports every three months. Parents helping parents is also looking for childcare providers to look after children in a separate play area during the meetings. Boston has groups in both Roxbury and Dorchester. If interested please contact Randall Block at 617-267-8077.

Educational Surrogate Parent (ESP) Program

This program is run out of the Massachusetts Department of Education. These volunteers represent children with their special education decisions. The students are between the ages of 3 and 22, living in foster homes, residential schools, group homes, and pediatric nursing homes. They have disabilities or are waiting to be evaluated for them. As an ESP,

you would go to a three-hour training. The commitment is only 10-20 hours per student per school year; you can help one or more students at a time. As an ESP through Boston RSVP, you would travel to schools and courthouses within Boston city limits. For more information, please call 508-792-7679 or send an email to espp@earthlink.net.

Peace Games

Peace Games works long term with school communities to help students solve conflicts and treat each other nicely. If you are a retired teacher and want to teach peacemaking strategies to elementary and middle school aged children through games and art, sign up with Peace Games. This program runs a few days per week. Two volunteers work together to teach. Peace Games schools include James J. Chittick Elementary School, Mattapan, Mission Grammar School, Roxbury, Nathan Hale Elementary School, Roxbury, Thomas J. Kenny Elementary, Dorchester, and Maurice J. Tobin Elementary School, Mission Hill. For more information call Nadine Marcellus at 617-261-3833.

Sargent College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, Boston University

The Neural Control of Movement Laboratory needs volunteers who have no neuromuscular disorders in the knee or elbow. You would visit the lab twice, for 1-2.5 hours each,

depending on what tests you choose to partake in (one is for knees, the other for elbows). If you are interested, please contact Dave Clark at 617-353-2304.

For more information on the RSVP program, please call: 617-635-3988

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Making a bequest to the American Heart Association says something special about you. It's a gift of health for future generations — an unselfish act of caring.

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To learn more about how you can leave a legacy for the future, call 1-800-AHA-USA1. Do it today.

American Heart Association

Fighting Heart Disease and Stroke



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Care Giving

By Teresa O'Connor

Are you caring for someone over the age of 60?

Are you a grandparent raising grandchildren?

If you answered yes to either or both of the questions above, then you are a caregiver. A caregiver is someone who provides services such as: bathing, dressing, grocery shopping, house cleaning, medication management, housing, transportation and money management. According to the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Administration on Aging (AoA), nearly 1 in 4 people are caregivers for an older adult. Most caregivers provide care giving out of a sense of responsibility to their loved one. Most assume the role without regard to their own personal state of health and well-being. Although it can be rewarding to assist an older loved one or provide for your grandchildren, it can also be challenging. Providing help to a loved one and balancing work, family and personal needs can be overwhelming. The taxation and responsibilities assumed by caregivers can contribute to or exacerbate any existing health problems of a caregiver.

According to the American Journal of Public Health, more than one third of caregivers providing care suffer from poor health themselves. The journal

also reports that middle aged and older spousal caregivers are six times more likely to have depressive or anxious symptoms versus spouses who did not perform care giving related duties. These statistics are indicative of future caregivers, especially with the population of 65 and older doubling from roughly 35 million today to a projected 71 million in 2030.

Are you a grandparent raising a grandchild? You are not alone. According the 2000 U.S. Census, nearly 2.5 million grandparents are raising grandchildren under the age of 18. Grandparents are assuming parental roles of their grandchildren at an alarming rate. There are limited resources available to this group of caregivers. Challenges faced by grandparents raising grandchildren are lack of accessibility to schools, isolation, declining health, fixed incomes, lack of affordable health care coverage and lack of affordable family housing. Grandparents raising grandchildren need support and advocacy.

Assuming any role as a caregiver is not easy! You should not feel guilty and take on enormous challenges because the person you are caring for is a loved one. Get help!

Are you someone who is providing care to someone over the age of 60? Are you a grandparent raising grandchildren? If you answered yes to either of these

questions, you are eligible to receive free services from the Caregiver Alliance of Suffolk County. The City of Boston's Commission on Affairs of the Elderly, along with Boston Senior Home Care, Central Boston Elder Services, Ethos and Chelsea, Revere, Winthrop Elder Services, is a collaborative member of Caregiver Alliance of Suffolk County. Services available to you through these agencies include: Caregiver information and referral, assistance in gaining access to caregiver services, individualized confidential caregiver counseling, caregiver support groups, care giving problem solving, information on respite care and scholarships for caregivers, and caregiver specific educational forums.

Please call the Boston Elder Info @ 617-292-6211 or the Boston Elderly Commission @ 617-635-46-366 if you or someone you know could benefit from caregiver support services.

1. The Older Americans Act. National Family Support Program: Compassion in Action. June 2004
2. American Journal of Public Health, Vol. 92, No. 3, March 2002
3. U.S. Census Bureau Report, 2000

REACH 2010 "Let's Walk Together"

Event Keeps Growing After Third

By Micheal McColgan



Gareth Kinkead, presides over welcoming ceremonies

On Saturday July 23rd, the Boston Public Health Commission and the Commission on Affairs of the Elderly hosted the third annual "Let's Walk Together at Franklin Park." This event is otherwise known as the REACH Boston Elders 2010 Walk. We were fortunate to have a beautiful, cooler, sunny morning, which brought out 123 seniors from the various neighborhoods of Boston.

The "Let's Walk Together" program started shortly after 9:00 a.m. with water distribution and welcoming remarks from April Taylor, Director of Cancer Prevention and Elder Health at the Boston Public Health Commission. Next, Gareth Kinkead, President of Shangri-La Walkers, the premier walking club in Boston provided words of encouragement to walkers. Following Gareth's encouragement was Anita Hudson, Elderly Commission's new Health Advocate who was able to pro-

vide seniors with suggestions on keeping cool during the summer's hot weather.

Moving on, YMCA Trainer Gladys Grullon of the Harriet Tubman House brought us all outside for the warm-up stretches. For the third year in row, Gladys did a fantastic job. Gareth Kinkead then led the walkers along a sloping asphalt path that runs along American Legion Highway for a brisk and breezy fitness walk under a natural canopy that was just perfect for a July morning.

At the completion of the walk, participants retired to the clubhouse dining room where they were joined by Mayor Menino for a continental breakfast and a health fair, conducted by the Boston Public Health Commission's Health Connection staff. During the breakfast, walk organizers were honored for their hard work by Gareth Kinkead who graciously presented them with special "Good Samaritan" certificates. Mayor Menino reminded the audience that it is extremely important that everyone completes the proper health screenings, maintains a healthy diet and exercises on a regular basis.

In addition to the people and programs mentioned above, we would like to acknowledge the support of Boston Emergency

Medical Services and the Boston Police Senior Response Officers who together, made sure that our seniors remained out of harm's way during this event. We thank the volunteers from the Hispanic Academy who established and staffed the water stations and who performed many other necessary tasks during the walk. We are also grateful to the members of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) who completed many of the behind-the-scenes preparations including mailings and goodie bag compilations.



Walkers relax in the shade

The purpose of this event was twofold:

- 1 To promote a greater awareness of the REACH Program's efforts to reduce health disparities with regard to cardiovascular diseases and diabetes among African American Seniors.

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RSVP Volunteers

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they've done military service, or been in jail."

Susan Rosefsky, his supervisor, said Bill saves the Society money "to the extent that he does a lot of repetitive, useful tasks," since without him, the librarians—who are all genealogists—would have to do them. "His uniqueness is that he has a very good working knowledge of the library," she added. The volunteer base is fairly evenly split between men and women; Bill is a life member.

At the U.S.S. Constitution Museum, in the Charlestown Navy Yard, creating beautiful model ships is more of an outlet to networking with people. Frank Clements and Tim Mahoney share a brightly painted workshop, with a paneless window to the wide hallway so visitors can look in.

"It gave me someplace to work on my ship, to meet people, and talk with them. Because people come here from all over the world: from New Zealand, all over Europe...it's like a fellowship—ship model builders," said Frank of his RSVP volunteer position. "That's what it's all about. Helping people."

If a modeler has a problem, five or six men come up and talk with him. People call and write letters to Frank, asking how to do things. By giving talks at church breakfast clubs and other venues, he has tried to get 30- and 40-year-olds, even children,

involved.

"I always tell kids, 'If you can build a model in a day, take a week. If you can take a week, take a month. There's no mistake that you can't fix. And the main thing is to have fun. If you're not having fun, put it down and come back in here later,'" he said.

Evidence of Frank's fun is all over the workshop in the form of ships, painted red, blue, and gold, with tiny, intricate masts meticulously put together. His work has been displayed internationally, and he co-founded the Model Shipwright Guild of New England in 1969. His friend Tim, an RSVP volunteer in the same workshop, is Quartermaster of the U.S.S. Constitution Model Shipwright Guild Newsletter.

"I look forward to rainy days sometimes so I get to work on my model," Tim admitted. "I think just a lot of people, retiring scares them. They don't know what to do. They have a lot of free time. But I never really understood that, because I've always had plenty of things to do."



Shine Volunteers gather for training at City Hall

LGBT Aging Project

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decided all seniors should have. We do staff trainings with elder service providers to help them do their jobs better. Sometimes all they can do is be a little more sensitive and welcoming. Sometimes they can develop new services for LGBT elders. Sometimes they join the LGBT Aging Project and work on "transforming the system" so that it is fair to everyone.

Consider inviting us to speak to your community group. We have a wonderful speaker's program that includes older gays and lesbians who are willing to talk with you about their lives, their concerns and their hopes for the future.

If you'd like to learn more about the LGBT Aging Project please contact the Director, Lisa Krinsky at 617.522.6700 x307

Additional Contact information:
LGBT Caregiver Support
Group Meets the First Monday
of the Month in Jamaica Plain.
Call Joanne Peskowitz
617.271.4182

Café Emmanuel – Meets every
Thursday at lunchtime,
reservations required, donation
requested Call Karen Doherty
617.522.6700



Participants perform warm up

- 2) To celebrate fitness and encourage these seniors to maintain or begin an exercise-walking program in a social and noncompetitive setting. REACH stands for Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health. REACH 2010 is a federally funded project designed to eliminate health disparities for minorities in the United States of America by the year 2010. Funding is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta and the Administration on Aging. The focus of this program is to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in health for African American residents 65 and older in the areas of cardiovascular disease and diabetes. The program is in its fourth year.

RECIPE CORNER

Please submit your favorite recipes to
Teresa O'Connor

By mail:

Room 271 Boston City Hall
Boston MA, 02201

By Phone: 617-635-2713

By email: Teresa.Oconnor@cityofboston.gov

OLD-FASHIONED APPLE PIE Serves 10 to 12

2 tablespoons of all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting Crust

12 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, and sliced

1 cup sugar, plus additional for pie top

Zest and juice of 1 lemon

1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon nutmeg

A pinch of ground cloves

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 large egg, beaten

1 pie crust

In a large bowl, combine apples, sugar, lemon zest and juice, spices, and flour. Toss well. Spoon apples into pie pan. Dot apples with butter and cover with crust. Cut several steam vents across top. Seal by crimping edges as desired. Brush with beaten egg, and sprinkle with additional sugar.

Bake until crust is brown and juices are bubbling, about 1 hour. Cool on wire rack before serving.

Thomas M. Menino
Mayor



Eliza F. Greenberg
Commissioner

Registration Form
The City of Boston Commission on Affairs of the Elderly
Presents



**Mayor Thomas M. Menino's
Health & Fitness Walk**

Wednesday, October 5, 2005

11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

on the Boston Common at the Visitor's Center at Park Street Station
Wear Comfortable Walking Shoes

If transportation is needed, please check (✓) your preferred site*:

Brighton	<input type="checkbox"/> Veronica B. Smith Senior Center, 20 Chestnut Hill Ave. <input type="checkbox"/> 20 Washington Street <input type="checkbox"/> Covenant House, 30 Washington Street	Jamaica Plain	<input type="checkbox"/> Curtis Hall Jamaica Plain, 20 South Street <input type="checkbox"/> Nate Smith Jamaica Plain, 155 Lamartine Street <input type="checkbox"/> Back of the Hill Apartments, 100 S. Huntington Ave.
Dorchester	<input type="checkbox"/> Saint Brendan Church, 589 Gallivan Blvd. <input type="checkbox"/> Keystone Apartments, 151 Hallett Street <input type="checkbox"/> Savin Hill Apartments, 130 Auckland Street <input type="checkbox"/> 37 Lindsey Street	Roxbury	<input type="checkbox"/> Council of Towers, 2875 Washington Street <input type="checkbox"/> Freedom House, 14 Crawford Street <input type="checkbox"/> Saint Joseph's Community, 86 Crispus Attucks Place
East Boston	<input type="checkbox"/> East Boston Social Center, 68 Central Square <input type="checkbox"/> Orient Heights Community Center, 86 Boardman Street <input type="checkbox"/> Brandy Wine, 88 Brandywine Drive	South Boston	<input type="checkbox"/> West Broadway Task Force, Pick-up at Condon School <input type="checkbox"/> Agnes V. Shen Senior Center, 7 Burke Street <input type="checkbox"/> Waterview Apartments, 1350 Columbia Rd.
Hyde Park/ Mattapan	<input type="checkbox"/> Georgetowne Apartments, 400 A Georgetowne Drive <input type="checkbox"/> Hyde Park Municipal Parking Lot <input type="checkbox"/> Church of the Holy Spirit, Mattapan, 535 River Street	West Roxbury	<input type="checkbox"/> VFW Pkwy, Centre Street between CVS & Walgreens <input type="checkbox"/> Cheriton Grove, 20 Cheriton Road

**Note: The Boston Common is on the
Red and Green Lines at Park Street Station**

All pick-ups will be between 9:45 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

*Sites may be deleted based on the number of people registered at each site. For more information, please call 617-635-4168

Entertainment Refreshments 2/3 Mile Walk Warm-Up Stretches Rain or Shine Mini Health Fair

If you are interested in participating, please complete the following form and return by Wednesday, September 28 to:
Commission on Affairs of the Elderly
One City Hall Plaza, Room 271 – Boston, MA 02201
Attention: Michael McColgan
Or Fax: 617-635-3213

Please Print

Name	Street Address
Neighborhood and Zip	Telephone

Waiver of Liability

I hereby agree to hold harmless the organizers and sponsors of Mayor Menino's Health and Fitness Walk from any and all claims of whatsoever kind and nature which I have or at any time in the future may have or any injury arising out of my participation in Mayor Menino's Health and Fitness Walk. I am in good physical condition, and have no medical restrictions, which would prohibit my participation in Mayor Menino's Health and Fitness Walk.

Signature _____ Date _____